

ALBERTA GRADE 6 SOCIAL STUDIES

FREE Year Plan + Complete Sample Lesson

New curriculum (implemented September 2026) · Systems unit, Lesson 8

START HERE

This free sampler has two parts: a year-at-a-glance planner for all four learning outcomes of Alberta's new Grade 6 Social Studies curriculum, and one complete lesson from our Systems unit, Lesson 8, 'Federal and provincial powers.' Everything needed to teach the lesson is here: student pages at two reading levels, the teacher plan, the answer key and the slides.

- **Year-at-a-Glance Organizer (3 pages)**

A suggested month-by-month order for all four Grade 6 outcomes, an outcome planner, and a Democracy Comparison Chart.

- **Lesson 8 — Federal and provincial powers (15 pages)**

The full lesson from the live Systems unit: Student Workbook pages, Accommodated Edition pages (easier reading level, large print), and Teacher Guide pages with the complete answer key. Includes the warm-up and the exit ticket.

- **Lesson-08-Federal-and-provincial-powers.pptx**

The lesson's teaching slide deck, with speaker notes. Opens in PowerPoint or Google Slides.

- **The full Grade 6 year (1 page)**

What the Time and Place, Systems and Citizenship units cover, and where to find them.

FREE INTERACTIVE: DEMOCRACY LAB

Play the 'Which Government Handles This?' mode free at milestoneteachers.com/labs/democracy-lab. Students sort everyday services to federal, provincial or municipal government (some are shared), the same split this lesson teaches, then step inside a 3D legislature chamber. No login or account; runs in a current desktop browser.

ABOUT THIS EXCERPT

- The warm-up reviews Lessons 6 and 7 of the Systems unit, which are not included; the answers to all three warm-up questions are on the Teacher Guide pages included here.
- Lesson 8 begins partway down the first Teacher Guide page, so the top of that page shows the end of Lesson 7's plan.
- One sourcing note for this lesson sits on the Teacher Guide page where Lesson 9 begins, so that page is not included. It reads: "SOURCES - The shared areas (agriculture and immigration, federal law prevails) are from The Canadian Encyclopedia, 'Distribution of Powers.'"
- Every lesson page is reproduced exactly as it appears in the Systems unit.

Questions or a problem with a file: admin@milestoneteachers.ca

Year-at-a-Glance Organizer

A suggested order, not a required sequence. Adjust the months to your school calendar.

 Time and Place  Systems  Citizenship

Month	Organizing idea	Suggested focus	My dates	Resources and notes
September	Time and Place	What makes a democracy: the four principles, and class decision-making routines. Start the comparison chart.		
October	Time and Place	Ancient Athens: direct democracy, who was a citizen, and how laws were debated and decided.		
November	Time and Place	The Roman Republic: representatives and three branches. Athens and Rome side by side.		
December	Time and Place	England: the Magna Carta, the Habeas Corpus Act and the Bill of Rights as steps toward rights and accountability.		
January	Time and Place	The Haudenosaunee Confederacy: consensus, the Grand Council, Chiefs and Clan Mothers. Finish the comparison chart.		
February	Systems	Canada's parliamentary system, the Crown's representatives, and how each level of government is elected.		
March	Systems	Premiers and the prime minister, the Official Opposition, MPs and MLAs, federal and provincial powers, independent courts.		
April	Citizenship	The Charter: fundamental freedoms, individual rights and reasonable limits. Students choose a civic issue.		
May	Citizenship	Collective rights and official languages; the Charter compared with other countries; discrimination and racism in Canada.		
June	Citizenship	Carry out and reflect on the civic participation project.		

Outcome Planner

Our summaries of each outcome's Skills & Procedures. Check the full wording on LearnAlberta before you plan assessments.

1. Democracy across time and place

TIME AND PLACE

STUDENTS WILL

- Investigate how democracy began in Athens.
- Compare Athens with the Roman Republic, and direct with representative democracy.
- Discuss how laws and agreements moved democracy forward.
- Explain how Chiefs and Clan Mothers take part in Haudenosaunee decision making.

Weeks

Evidence I will collect

Key resources

Vocabulary

2. Democracy in Canada

SYSTEMS

STUDENTS WILL

- Connect the parliamentary system and earlier systems to democracy in Canada.
- Describe the evidence of democratic principles in Canada today.
- Describe how each level of government is elected.
- Argue for the role of an Official Opposition and an independent judiciary.
- Tell provincial responsibilities apart from federal ones.

Weeks

Evidence I will collect

Key resources

Vocabulary

3. The Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms

CITIZENSHIP

STUDENTS WILL

- Judge which Charter rights and freedoms matter most to them, and why.
- Compare the Charter with similar documents in other countries.
- Propose new responsibilities, and new freedoms, for people in Canada.
- Examine groups that experience discrimination in Canada.

Weeks

Evidence I will collect

Key resources

Vocabulary

4. Civic participation in Canada

CITIZENSHIP

STUDENTS WILL

- Make the case for civic participation, and plan a civic participation project.

Weeks

Evidence I will collect

Key resources

Vocabulary

Democracy Comparison Chart

Fill in a row each time your class studies a new system. Use evidence from your reading, not just your opinion.

Principles of democracy: equality under law · justice · freedom · representation

	Who takes part in decisions?	How are decisions made?	What limits power?	Which principle does it show best, and how?
Ancient Athens				
Roman Republic				
England: Magna Carta (1215), Habeas Corpus Act (1679), Bill of Rights (1689)				
Haudenosaunee Confederacy				
Canada today				

LESSON 8

Who Decides? Federal and Provincial Powers

CANADA'S CONSTITUTION · SINCE 1867

Citizens

Elections

Legislatures

Government

Opposition

Crown

Courts

Constitution: the base of the system

INQUIRY QUESTION: How does the Constitution Act, 1867 decide which government handles defence, schools or a pothole?

WARM-UP · FROM EARLIER LESSONS

W1. Which party becomes His Majesty's Loyal Opposition? (Lesson 7)

W2. How many minutes does Question Period last? (Lesson 7)

W3. In Alberta, who gives Royal Assent after third reading? (Lesson 6)

WORDS TO KNOW

federal state: a country where powers are split between a national government and regional ones

jurisdiction: the area a government has the power to make laws about

Parliament: the law-making body for all of Canada

legislature: the law-making body of a province or territory

municipality: a city, town, village or county with its own council

devolution: handing powers down from the federal government to a territory

READ: FEDERAL AND PROVINCIAL POWERS

- 1 Canada is a federal state. This means the powers of government are split between two levels. There is one national, or federal, government and there are several provincial governments. The split is set out in the Constitution Act, 1867.

- 2 Section 91 of the Act lists matters for the Parliament of Canada. They include the postal service, defence, currency and coinage, and the criminal law. Parliament was meant to handle matters of national interest. The provinces would handle regional ones.
- 3 Section 92 lists matters for each provincial legislature. They include hospitals and municipal institutions. They also include property and civil rights. Section 93 lets each province make laws about education.
- 4 Municipalities get their powers from the province, not from the Constitution. The province creates cities, towns and counties. They provide local services. These include waste disposal, public transit, fire services, community centres and libraries.
- 5 Territories are different again. The federal government hands their law-making powers down to them, a process called devolution. Some areas are shared by both levels. For example, agriculture and immigration are shared, and if laws in those areas clash, the federal law wins.

KEY FACTS

- 1 Section 91 gives Parliament defence, the postal service, currency and the criminal law.
- 2 Sections 92 and 93 give provinces hospitals, municipal institutions and education.
- 3 Municipalities get their powers from the province, not from the Constitution.

Name _____ Date _____

PRIMARY SOURCE: THE CONSTITUTION ACT, 1867, SECTIONS 91 TO 93

91... the exclusive Legislative Authority of the Parliament of Canada extends to all Matters coming within the Classes of Subjects next hereinafter enumerated ... 5. Postal Service. ... 7. Militia, Military and Naval Service, and Defence. ... 14. Currency and Coinage. ... 92 In each Province the Legislature may exclusively make Laws in relation to Matters coming within the Classes of Subjects next hereinafter enumerated ... 8. Municipal Institutions in the Province. ... 93 In and for each Province the Legislature may exclusively make Laws in relation to Education

Constitution Act, 1867, ss. 91, 92 and 93, from the Justice Laws Website (laws-lois.justice.gc.ca). Reproduced under the Reproduction of Federal Law Order; not the official version.

Spelling and capital letters are as printed in the Act. The dots (...) show where words are left out. Militia means citizen soldiers; enumerated means listed.

IN PLAIN LANGUAGE

Section 91: Parliament alone makes laws on the listed subjects, such as the postal service, the armed forces and defence, and money (currency and coins). Section 92: each province's legislature alone makes laws on its listed subjects, such as its cities and towns. Section 93: each province makes laws about education.

S1. **SOURCE** Name two matters section 91 gives to Parliament.

S2. **SOURCE** Which level makes laws about education, according to section 93?

S3. **SOURCE** Why might the Act give defence to Parliament and municipal institutions to the provinces?

SHOW WHAT YOU KNOW

Paragraph numbers point to the reading

1. **FIND IT** Name two matters that section 91 gives to the Parliament of Canada. (paragraph 2)

2. **FIND IT** Which section gives provinces the power to make laws about education? (paragraph 3)

3. **FIND IT** Where do municipalities get their powers? (paragraph 4)

4. **FIND IT** If federal and provincial laws on immigration clash, which one wins? (paragraph 5)

5. **THINK** Why would the writers of the Act give defence to Parliament instead of to each province? (paragraph 2)

6. **APPLY** A pothole on your street and a new hospital: which level handles each? Explain.

WHO HANDLES THIS?

Write F (federal: Parliament), P (provincial legislature) or M (municipal council) beside each matter.

F = Federal P = Provincial M = Municipal

- ☐ 1. Mail delivery (the postal service)
- ☐ 2. A new hospital
- ☐ 3. The armed forces and defence
- ☐ 4. Grade 6 education
- ☐ 5. Garbage and waste disposal
- ☐ 6. Printing money and making coins
- ☐ 7. The local library
- ☐ 8. Creating a new town

GO FURTHER

For when you finish early or want a challenge

Choose two more items from section 91 or section 92 of the Constitution Act, 1867 and rewrite each in plain language. Say why each fits its level of government.

EXIT TICKET

cut along the dashed line

RECALL

Which level makes laws about education in Alberta?

THINK

Why does Canada split powers between levels instead of having one government decide everything?

SELF-CHECK • HOW WELL CAN I EXPLAIN EACH KEY FACT?

Section 91 gives Parliament defence, the postal service, currency and the criminal law.

☐ Not yet ☐ Getting there ☐ Got it

Sections 92 and 93 give provinces hospitals, municipal institutions and education.

☐ Not yet ☐ Getting there ☐ Got it

Municipalities get their powers from the province, not from the Constitution.

☐ Not yet ☐ Getting there ☐ Got it

Who Decides? Federal and Provincial Powers

CANADA'S CONSTITUTION · SINCE 1867



Citizens

Elections

Legislatures

Government

Opposition

Crown

Courts

Constitution: the base of the system

INQUIRY QUESTION: How does the Constitution Act, 1867 decide which government handles defence, schools or a pothole?

WARM-UP · FROM EARLIER LESSONS

W1. Which party becomes His Majesty's Loyal Opposition? (Lesson 7)

W2. How many minutes does Question Period last? (Lesson 7)

W3. In Alberta, who gives Royal Assent after third reading? (Lesson 6)

WORDS TO KNOW

federal state: a country where powers are split between a national government and regional ones

jurisdiction: the area a government has the power to make laws about

Parliament: the law-making body for all of Canada

legislature: the law-making body of a province or territory

municipality: a city, town, village or county with its own council

devolution: handing powers down from the federal government to a territory

READ: FEDERAL AND PROVINCIAL POWERS

Read-aloud ready

- 1** Canada is a federal state. Powers are split between two levels. There is one federal government for all of Canada. There are provincial governments too. The Constitution Act, 1867 sets out the split.
- 2** Section 91 lists jobs for Parliament. They include the postal service and defence. They also include currency and coinage, and the criminal law. These matter to the whole country.
- 3** Section 92 lists jobs for each province. Two are hospitals and municipal institutions. Section 93 is about education. Each province makes its own laws about it.
- 4** Municipalities get their powers from the province. The province creates cities, towns and counties. They give local services. Some are waste disposal, fire services and libraries.
- 5** Territories are different. The federal government hands powers down to them. This is called devolution. Some areas are shared, such as farming and immigration. If the laws clash, the federal law wins.

KEY FACTS

- 1 Section 91 gives Parliament defence, the postal service, currency and the criminal law.
- 2 Sections 92 and 93 give provinces hospitals, municipal institutions and education.
- 3 Municipalities get their powers from the province, not from the Constitution.

Name _____ Date _____

PRIMARY SOURCE: THE CONSTITUTION ACT, 1867, SECTIONS 91 TO 93

91 ... the exclusive Legislative Authority of the Parliament of Canada extends to all Matters coming within the Classes of Subjects next hereinafter enumerated ... 5. Postal Service. ... 7. Militia, Military and Naval Service, and Defence. ... 14. Currency and Coinage. ... 92 In each Province the Legislature may exclusively make Laws in relation to Matters coming within the Classes of Subjects next hereinafter enumerated ... 8. Municipal Institutions in the Province. ... 93 In and for each Province the Legislature may exclusively make Laws in relation to Education

Constitution Act, 1867, ss. 91, 92 and 93, from the Justice Laws Website (laws-lois.justice.gc.ca). Reproduced under the Reproduction of Federal Law Order; not the official version.

Spelling and capital letters are as printed in the Act. The dots (...) show where words are left out. Militia means citizen soldiers; enumerated means listed.

IN PLAIN LANGUAGE

Section 91: Parliament alone makes laws on the listed subjects, such as the postal service, the armed forces and defence, and money (currency and coins). Section 92: each province's legislature alone makes laws on its listed subjects, such as its cities and towns. Section 93: each province makes laws about education.

S1. **SOURCE** Name two matters section 91 gives to Parliament.

S2. **SOURCE** Which level makes laws about education, according to section 93?

SHOW WHAT YOU KNOW

Paragraph numbers point to the reading

WORD BANK - some words are extra

91

libraries

from the King

postal service

federal law wins

defence

the newest law wins

from the province

93

1. **FIND IT** Name two matters that section 91 gives to the Parliament of Canada. (paragraph 2)

2. **FIND IT** Which section gives provinces the power to make laws about education? (paragraph 3)

3. **FIND IT** Where do municipalities get their powers? (paragraph 4)

4. **FIND IT** If federal and provincial laws on immigration clash, which one wins? (paragraph 5)

6. **APPLY** A pothole on your street and a new hospital: which level handles each? Explain.

The pothole is ... because ... The hospital is ... because ...

WHO HANDLES THIS?

Write F (federal: Parliament), P (provincial legislature) or M (municipal council) beside each matter.

F = Federal P = Provincial M = Municipal

- ☐ 1. Mail delivery (the postal service)
- ☐ 2. A new hospital
- ☐ 3. The armed forces and defence
- ☐ 4. Grade 6 education
- ☐ 5. Garbage and waste disposal
- ☐ 6. Printing money and making coins
- ☐ 7. The local library
- ☐ 8. Creating a new town

GO FURTHER For when you finish early or want a challenge

Choose two more items from section 91 or section 92 of the Constitution Act, 1867 and rewrite each in plain language. Say why each fits its level of government.

EXIT TICKET

cut along the dashed line

RECALL

Which level makes laws about education in Alberta?

THINK

Why does Canada split powers between levels instead of having one government decide everything?

SELF-CHECK · HOW WELL CAN I EXPLAIN EACH KEY FACT?

Section 91 gives Parliament defence, the postal service, currency and the criminal law. ☐ Not yet ☐ Getting there ☐ Got it

Sections 92 and 93 give provinces hospitals, municipal institutions and education. ☐ Not yet ☐ Getting there ☐ Got it

Municipalities get their powers from the province, not from the Constitution. ☐ Not yet ☐ Getting there ☐ Got it

GO FURTHER • EXTENSION

Prompt	Write a respectful Question Period exchange about a made-up problem: the critic's question and the minister's answer. Then explain what the public learns from it.
Look for	A question directed to a minister, respectful and specific; what the public learns.

TEACHING NOTES

Note 1	CURRICULUM WORDING - The outcome ties accountability to an Official Opposition. The Parliament of Canada gives the role to all opposition members; the Official Opposition is the largest of them. The unit teaches both.
Note 2	NONPARTISAN - Question Period clips can be heated. Preview any clip, choose one without personal attacks, and keep the discussion on roles, never on which party is right.

LESSON PLAN AND ANSWER KEY

Lesson 8 • Who Decides? Federal and Provincial Powers

PLAN

Minutes	60
Materials	Slides L8, workbook pages for Lesson 8 (primary source page).
Slides	Lesson 8 deck, 10 slides
Codes	SY-K10, SY-S06 (revisits SY-K05)
Hook	Army, mail, school, pothole: who decides? (4 min)
Teach	Three levels of decisions; the Act, side by side; municipalities (21 min)
Read	Reading and the primary source (15 min)
Practise	Questions 1-6 and the sort (11 min)
Discuss	The gym-teacher case file (9 min)
Likely misconception	The federal government is the boss of the provinces and can make any law.
Question that surfaces it	Can Parliament write Alberta's Grade 6 curriculum? Why or why not? Listen for: No: section 93 gives each province the power to make laws about education.

30-minute version Warm-up; the side-by-side slide and the primary source; questions 1 to 4; exit ticket.

ANSWER KEY • WARM-UP (FROM EARLIER LESSONS)

W1. Which party becomes His Majesty's Loyal Opposition? (Lesson 7)	The party with the second-highest number of MPs.
W2. How many minutes does Question Period last? (Lesson 7)	45 minutes.
W3. In Alberta, who gives Royal Assent after third reading? (Lesson 6)	The Lieutenant Governor.

ANSWER KEY • SHOW WHAT YOU KNOW

1. FIND IT	Any two: the postal service, defence, currency and coinage, the criminal law.
2. FIND IT	Section 93.
3. FIND IT	From the province (not from the Constitution).
4. FIND IT	The federal law.
5. THINK (standard edition only)	Defence protects the whole country, a matter of national interest, so one national government handles it for everyone.
6. APPLY	The pothole: the municipality (local roads are a local service the province gives it). The hospital: the province (section 92 lists hospitals).

ANSWER KEY • PRIMARY SOURCE

S1. Name two matters section 91 gives to Parliament.	Any two: the postal service; militia, military and naval service, and defence; currency and coinage.
S2. Which level makes laws about education, according to section 93?	Each province's legislature (section 93).
S3. Why might the Act give defence to Parliament and municipal institutions to the provinces?	Defence protects the whole country, a national interest, so Parliament handles it; municipal institutions are local, so the province, closer to them, handles them.

ANSWER KEY • WHO HANDLES THIS?

1. Mail delivery (the postal service)	F (Federal)
2. A new hospital	P (Provincial)
3. The armed forces and defence	F (Federal)
4. Grade 6 education	P (Provincial)
5. Garbage and waste disposal	M (Municipal)
6. Printing money and making coins	F (Federal)
7. The local library	M (Municipal)
8. Creating a new town	P (Provincial)

ANSWER KEY • EXIT TICKET

RECALL: Which level makes laws about education in Alberta?	The province: Alberta's legislature (section 93).
THINK: Why does Canada split powers between levels instead of having one government decide everything?	Canada is large and regions differ; national matters such as defence go to Parliament, while regional and local matters are handled by governments closer to the people.

GO FURTHER • EXTENSION

Prompt	Choose two more items from section 91 or section 92 of the Constitution Act, 1867 and rewrite each in plain language. Say why each fits its level of government.
Look for	Accurate items quoted from the Act, a plain-language version and a reason for the level.

TEACHING NOTES

Note 1	PRIMARY SOURCE – The excerpt is copied from the Justice Laws Website, where the Reproduction of Federal Law Order lets anyone reproduce federal enactments without permission if the copy is accurate and not presented as the official version; the workbook says so.
Note 2	CURRICULUM WORDING – The curriculum says the Constitution Act divides authority between provincial and federal governments. Municipalities have no powers of their own under it; provinces grant them. Territories receive powers from the federal government by devolution. The unit teaches both exceptions.

THE FULL GRADE 6 YEAR

This sampler's lesson comes from one of three units. Alberta's new Grade 6 Social Studies curriculum has four learning outcomes, covered across three full Milestone Teachers units:



TIME AND PLACE

How the principles of democracy show up across time: ancient Athens, the Roman Republic, England's Magna Carta and Bill of Rights, and the Haudenosaunee Confederacy.

milestoneteachers.com/store/products/17785365



SYSTEMS

Democracy in Canada today: the Crown, elections at three levels, the prime minister and premiers, MPs and MLAs, the Official Opposition, federal/provincial powers (this sampler's lesson) and the independent courts.

milestoneteachers.com/store/products/17784286



CITIZENSHIP

The Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms and civic participation: fundamental freedoms, equality and legal rights, reasonable limits, and a class civic action project.

milestoneteachers.com/store/products/17784483

ALL THREE UNITS IN ONE BUNDLE

milestoneteachers.com/store/products/17785449

FREE INTERACTIVE FOR THE WHOLE YEAR

Democracy Lab (free online, no login) has one mode per unit: 'Who Has a Voice?' (Time and Place), 'Which Government Handles This?' (Systems, this sampler's lesson) and 'Charter Check' (Citizenship). Each paid unit also includes it as a folder that runs offline.

milestoneteachers.com/labs/democracy-lab